

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CONAKRY 1534

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SUBJECT : GUINEA BISSAU COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
CALLS AT EMBASSY

REF: CONAKRY 1527

SUMMARY: VICTOR MARIA, COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE NEW GUINEA BISSAU GOVERNMENT, CALLED AT EMBASSY ON SEPTEMBER 27, AT REQUEST OF PAIGC SECRETARY-GENERAL PEREIRA. MARIA WAS OPEN AND FRIENDLY IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INTENTIONS AND POLICIES OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT TOWARD THE OUTSIDE WORLD, THE INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES AND OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING GUINEA BISSAU. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WERE HIS COMMENTS THAT THE PAIGC STILL WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL FOREIGN COUNTRIES, IS WILLING TO TALK WITH PORTUGAL AS LONG AS THERE ARE NO PRE-CONDITIONS TO TALKS, AND WILL DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHO THEIR FRIENDS WILL BE. END SUMMARY.

1. VICTOR MARIA, COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE NEWLY-DECLARED GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA BISSAU, CALLED
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AT THE EMBASSY ON SEPTEMBER 27. MARIA SAID HE HAD JUST

RETURNED FROM THE INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES, AND HAD COME AT THE REQUEST OF PAIGC SEC GEN ARISTIDES PEREIRA.

2. IN DISCUSSING THE SEPTEMBER 24 INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES INSIDE GUINEA BISSAU MARIA SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA, PRESS REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FOLLOWING COUNTRIES WERE ALSO THERE: ALGERIA, EAST GERMANY, FRANCE, SWEDEN AND THE USSR. SO FAR, THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY TO RECOGNIZE THE INDEPENDENCE OF GUINEA BISSAU, BUT THIS WAS BECAUSE OF THE TIME FACTOR. (PAIGC COMMUNIQUE OF SEPT 27 SAID UPPER VOLTA HAD ALSO RECOGNIZED NEW GOVT.) ONLY "SOME" AFRICAN CHIEFS OF STATE HAD BEEN INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF THE INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES AND EVEN THEY ONLY KNEW THE APPROXIMATE NOT THE EXACT DATE. (THE NIGERIAN CHARGE TELLS US THAT MESSAGES HAVE NOW GONE TO AFRICAN AND OTHER CHIEFS OF STATE REQUESTING RECOGNITION.) THE LOCAL PAIGC OFFICE IS STILL PREPARING THE COMMUNIQUE ON THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS WHICH SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED LATER TODAY. CONCERNING ARISTIDES PEREIRA'S STATUS AS SECRETARY GENERAL, MARIA SAID THIS IS A PARTY TITLE. LOUIS CABRAL IS CHIEF OF STATE, FRANCISCO MENDEZ ("CHICO") CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT, AND PEREIRA HEAD OF THE UNIQUE PARTY.

3. MARIA INSISTED THAT IN HIS SPEECH ON SEPTEMBER 25, LUIS CABRAL HAD THANKED SENEGAL IN ADDITION TO THE COUNTRIES MENTIONED PARA 5 REFTEL. MENTION OF SENEGAL WAS DELETED BY THE AUTHORITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA GOVERNMENT BEFORE THEIR RADIO STATION BROADCAST THE CEREMONY. WHEN ASKED IF THE PAIGC HAD BEEN UNDER ANY PRESSURE FROM THE CONAKRY GUINEANS TO CHANGE PAIGC POLICY TOWARDS SENEGAL, MARIA SAID THEY HAD NOT AND INSISTED THAT THE PAIGC DECIDES FOR ITSELF WHO ITS FRIENDS WILL BE. THEY NEED BOTH GUINEA AND SENEGAL IN THEIR FIGHT FOR INDEPENDENCE AND WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE OUT OF SENEGAL AS IN THE PAST. (HE SAID NOTHING ABOUT WHETHER SHIPMENTS OF ARMS AND SUPPLIES COULD CONTINUE TO GO TO SENEGAL THROUGH GUINEA.)

4. CONTINUING THIS THEME, MARIA SAID THE PAIGC WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES. HE INSISTED THE MOVEMENT IS CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT COMMUNIST BUT TAKES HELP FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AS FROM ANYONE ELSE. AS FOR THE PORTUGUESE, THE PAIGC HAS BEEN AND IS STILL WILLING TO TALK WITH THEM ABOUT INDEPENDENCE. THE ONLY CONDITION IMPOSED BY THE PAIGC IS THAT THERE BE NO PRE-CONDITIONS TO THE TALKS. HE SAID HE KNEW OF NO CONTACTS OF ANY KIND BETWEEN THE PAIGC AND THE PORTUGUESE. PAIGC IS COUNTING ON: (A) THOSE ELEMENTS IN THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT WHO ARE OPPOSED TO THE WAR, "AFTER ALL THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE THEM-

SELVES ARE SUFFERING MORE THAN WE ARE", AND; (B) THE UNITED STATES TO BRING PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL TO NEGOTIATE.

5. WITH THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE THE PAIGC HEAD-QUARTERS AND THE CAPITAL OF THE NEW COUNTRY WILL BE INSIDE GUINEA BISSAU, TEMPORARILY AT MADINA DO BOE. A SMALL LIAISON OFFICE WILL BE MAINTAINED IN CONAKRY BUT ALL HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS OF THE PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL OPERATE FROM INSIDE GUINEA BISSAU. THE PAIGC NOW CONTROLS, ACCORDING TO MARIA, TWO-THIRDS OF THE TERRITORY OF PORTUGUESE GUINEA. PORTUGUESE CLAIMS THAT MADINA DO BOE IS BUSH COUNTRY ARE NOT TRUE AS THE PORTUGUESE HAD ABANDONED THREE MILITARY INSTALLATIONS THERE WHEN THE AREA WAS CAPTURED BY THE PAIGC. AS FOR THE FUTURE, MARIA SAID THAT THE PAIGC WAS IN NO HURRY TO CAPTURE BISSAU ITSELF AS IT WOULD FALL INTO PAIGC HANDS AT THE PROPER TIME. CONCERNING THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS, HE WAS EVEN MORE VAGUE AND SIMPLY SAID THAT "WE ARE DOING SOMETHING THERE, TOO". HE WOULD NOT GIVE ANY TIMETABLE FOR THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF THE AREA.

6. MARIA IS SHORT, HEAVY-SET, AND AFFABLE. HE SAYS HE IS FROM THE MAINLAND. HE SAID HE NEVER VISITED THE UNITED STATES, BUT SPEAKS GOOD ENGLISH WHICH HE SAID HE LEARNED IN GUINEA BISSAU. HE ALSO SPEAKS GOOD FRENCH.
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